

UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
CERTIFICATE OF CORRECTION

PATENT NO. : 7,257,552 B1
APPLICATION NO. : 09/817535
DATED : August 14, 2007
INVENTOR(S) : Hector Franco

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It is certified that error appears in the above-identified patent and that said Letters Patent is hereby corrected as shown below:

Column 66, line 22 — Column 68, line 39, delete Claims 1-12 and substitute therefore the attached Claims 1-12.

--1. A network-based computer-assisted method of managing product distribution and facilitating a transfer of purchases from a plurality of merchants to a plurality of consumers, the method comprising:

for each consumer of the plurality of consumers:

receiving an identification of a plurality of items ordered by the consumer, wherein each of the plurality of items is ordered by the consumer from a different one of the plurality of merchants;

associating the plurality of items with each other on a computer system;

identifying a temporary storage facility proximate the consumer, from which the plurality of associated items can be transferred to the consumer;

identifying a date and time for transferring the plurality of associated items to the consumer;

for each item of the plurality of associated items:

identifying an estimated transportation time for said each item to be transported from a point of origin to the identified temporary storage facility; and

based at least on the identified estimated transportation time and the identified date and time for transferring the plurality of associated items to the consumer, synchronizing a shipment of said each item from the point of origin to the identified temporary storage facility in accordance with a just-in-time schedule compliant with the identified date and time for transferring the plurality of associated items to the consumer;

receiving the plurality of associated items at the identified temporary storage facility;

physically aggregating the plurality of associated items at the identified temporary storage facility based at least on the association of the plurality of associated items on the computer system; and

transferring the physically aggregated plurality of associated items to the consumer.--

-- 2. The method of claim 1, wherein each of the plurality of items are associated with each other indirectly through an association of each item with the consumer ordering the item.--

--3. The method of claim 2, wherein each of the ordered items is a product or comprises one or more products.--

-- 4. The method of claim 3, wherein identifying a temporary storage facility proximate the consumer, further comprises:

presenting to the consumer at least one temporary storage facility proximate the consumer at which the consumer can receive the items;

obtaining from the consumer a selection of one of the temporary storage facilities; and

notifying the merchants of the identity of the temporary storage facility selected by the consumer.--

--5. The method of claim 4, wherein identifying a date and time for transferring the plurality of items to the consumer, further comprises receiving from the consumer, an identification of a date and time at which the consumer will expect to receive the items.--

--6. The method of claim 5, wherein said synchronizing further comprises:

including in a group of items said each item and other items ordered by other consumers of said plurality of consumers, wherein all the items in the group are destined for the identified temporary storage facility, have a same point of origin, and have similar dates and times for transferring to consumers; and

based at least on the identified estimated transportation time and the identified date and time for transfer, synchronizing shipping of the items in the group from the point of origin to the identified temporary storage facility in accordance with a just-in-time schedule compliant with the identified date and time for transferring to consumers.--

--7. The method of claim 6, further comprising

providing each merchant target shipping dates, times, and schedules compliant with the identified dates and times for transferring items to consumers.--

--8. The method of claim 7, further comprising

providing each temporary storage facility:

a shipping schedule of each group of items destined to that facility;

an identification of the items in each group; and

aggregation instructions to physically aggregate the items in the groups received in accordance with the association of items in the computer system for each consumer.--

--9. The method of claim 8, wherein transferring the physically aggregated items to the consumer comprises having the consumer pick up the physically aggregated items at the identified temporary storage facility.--

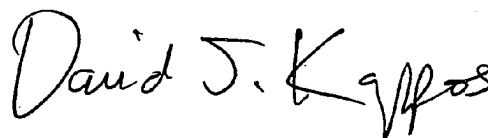
--10. The method of claim 9, further comprising reminding the consumer of the identified date and time to pick up the physically aggregated items at the temporary storage facility.--

--11. The method of claim 8, wherein transferring the physically aggregated items to the consumer comprises sending the physically aggregated items to the consumer from the temporary storage facility.--

--12. The method of claim 11, further comprising instructing a delivery service to pick up the physically aggregated items at the temporary storage facility and to deliver the physically aggregated items to the consumer.--

Signed and Sealed this

Sixteenth Day of March, 2010

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David J. Kappos". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'D' and 'K'.

David J. Kappos
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office